

Department of Fish and Game
Impact Statements in Response to
Senate Finance Subcommittee Budget Proposals
Date: April 16, 2003
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The Senate Finance subcommittee passed a general fund budget at an overall same level as the governor's amended budget, but they transferred \$800,000 general funds from the State Subsistence Component to various components in the Commercial Fisheries BRU to offset general fund reductions proposed by the governor.

Program:	Dollar	Fund
State Subsistence	Amount(s):	Source(s):
	(\$800,000)	General Fund

Impact Title: Short fund State Subsistence program by 80%.

Impact Analysis:

The Governor's budget replaced \$1 million in AIDEA dividend receipts (a one-time funding source from FY03) with \$800,000 in general funds, which was a reduction of \$200,000 in general funds. The Senate Finance subcommittee reduction will eliminate any effective role for the Division of Subsistence because it potentially puts in jeopardy the \$2.1 million in federal funds that also supports the division's work.

Subsistence is, by law, the priority use of fish and game in Alaska (AS 16.05.258). The Division of Subsistence is the primary state agency charged with implementing that law (AS 16.05.094). This reduction will mean most subsistence harvests will no longer be monitored.

Without information provided by the Subsistence Division, the state fish and game boards will have only outdated or incomplete information; this will increase the likelihood of the boards either failing to provide reasonable opportunity for subsistence or conversely, setting conservative management objectives that unnecessarily restrict other uses.

The Subsistence Division provides an essential liaison function for all the divisions in the department with the federal program. Without a strong state participation in dual management, federal managers may seriously consider or even adopt ill-advised proposals or take unnecessary actions, further diverging state and federal regulatory regimes. This will result in more confusion for the public and increased possibilities for more conflict.